
Aida Tomescu
Torn through the white



Torn through the white I - VI, 2024 - 2025, Photography courtesy Jenni Carter

Keeping things fluid, layered and evolving have been constants in Tomescu's use of mixed media and collage. Here the…richness of materials and gestures suggest an uncanny sense of something old, accumulated over time, and something fresh and vital in the present.

States of Becoming, Deborah Hart, Senior Curator, National Gallery of Australia





Seria Neagra I, 1999
Lift ground aquatint with dry-point
47 1/4 x 31 1/2 in
120 x 80 cm
Edition of 18

The richness of feeling in Tomescu's work of this period of maturity, reveals what would continue as a deep engagement with the complexities and subtle nuances of experience – of being and becoming

Deborah Hart, Senior Curator, National Gallery of Australia



Seria Neagra I-IV, 1999, Photography Courtesy National Gallery of Australia, Canberra

Flowers Gallery is delighted to participate in this year's edition of the IFPDA Print Fair with a special solo presentation by celebrated artist Aida Tomescu. The booth will highlight her ever evolving process through etching, drawing and painting. One of Australia's foremost abstract painters, Aida Tomescu's work projects a compelling presence with a powerful sense of scale and fearlessness. Throughout her career spanning over 40 years, she has been developing and enlarging the themes and content of her work, to arrive at 'live structures' forming from within. Tomescu says, *Ultimately nothing is fixed in painting, etching or collage. Even though you break through with a line deeply into an etching ground, the aim is for the image to lift off that surface, have a pulse.*

'Torn through the white', the new series by Aida Tomescu, takes its title from Thomas Bernhard's early volume of poetry 'Under the Iron of the Moon'. Tomescu's works have long incorporated literary references, generating their rhythm during the journey of their making. They develop connections between multiple sources, always charged by the present. Tomescu describes Bernhard's verse as "the poetic frame" of her new collage & mixed media series.

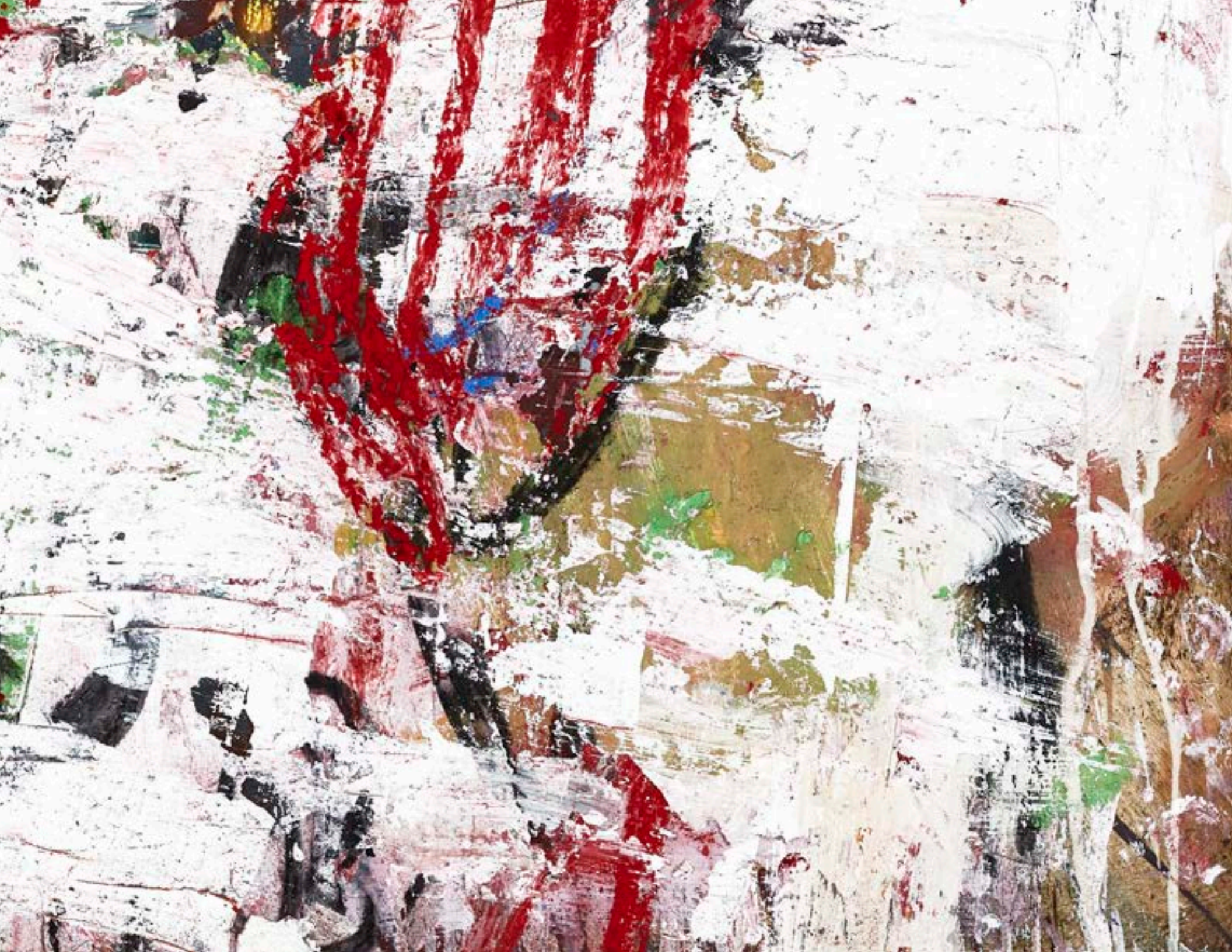
I turn to something very specific, at times to literature and poetry. It triggers new material that is incorporated and has to be constructed. One source, one theme, generates associative thinking and connections that give me entry into the work, ignites a new direction, multiplying the potential. The surface slowly discards what is unnecessary, sheds what doesn't clarify my construction. Gradually the work becomes more and more complex and gives me a lot to consider, to reflect on– a lot to do.

Drawing is central to Tomescu's thinking. It exists alongside her paintings, in the service of form and structure. It is never preparatory and has become a welcomed intrusion in her larger paintings. While the works from this series preserve a look of utmost spontaneity, they are the result of a coordinated, gradual construction, and a rigorous critical appraisal of the overall, and of the resolution of each image.

In each new series, regardless of media, there is a persistent interplay between intensity and lightness of touch, a nerviness of gesture, along with an impulse to blow predictable configurations sky-high, unsettle the work's structure and recast in a new complex and surprising way.

This exhibition centres on Tomescu's high-energy series 'Torn through the white', completed in 2025, presented alongside a selection of Tomescu's aquatint and intaglio etchings and her recent major painting 'With the crimson word' with its intense and raptured surface, echoing the unpredictable construction of her collages. The presentation invites dialogues between media and emphasises the ways in which Tomescu's drawings are progressively layered, expansive and informed by colour, like the paintings, while drawing is increasingly entering Tomescu's larger paintings.

Drawing keeps my work in the midst of discovery, allows me to find and retain a purer voice in the course of the work, and let the image whistle in an unexpected tune.





Ithaca I-X, 1997, Etching, 80 x 60 cm, Edition of 15. *Unfolding Presence* installation images 2021, Orange Regional Gallery. Photography by John Daly.



Your Hand Full of Hours, 2021
Oil on Belgian linen
13 3/4 x 9 7/8 in
35 x 25 cm



Torn through the white IV, 2025
Mixed media on paper
47 5/8 x 31 1/2 in
121 x 80 cm



Torn through the white III & VI, 2025
Mixed media on paper
47 5/8 x 31 1/2 in
121 x 80 cm





The openings, (the etched ground peeping around the edges) allow for a pause, a delay in the reading of the image. They also concentrate the inner energy of each work. Here pastel lines don't describe the edges of forms, they penetrate, they 'lift' and generate space. All the incidents, the torn edges of collage, the drips and the splatters that survive are an integral part of the structure of each work. We experience the covering-over, the erasures, the traces of each work's history.. The edges of each image are slowly considered mark by mark; the resulting unpredictability of the relationships is both certain and fragile.

The surface produces appearances and gives off a certain state, a certain condition that is like a spirit of place or an intuition.

Aida Tomescu



With the Crimson Word II, 2023
Oil on Belgian linen
78 3/4 x 60 1/4 in
200 x 153 cm



With the Crimson Word, Installation view at Flowers Gallery, Cork Street, London, 2023
Vis a Vis, 2023 & *Chartres*, 2023, Private Collections, London & New York



Torn through the white II & I, 2024-2025
Mixed media on paper
47 5/8 x 31 1/2 in
121 x 80 cm



There is so much life in Tomescu's drawings. At first glance a large series of evocative drawings may appear like impassioned expressions – fast and spontaneous. Yet each work in the series has evolved gradually over time: built up layer upon layer, the drawn lines probing space and overlapping, rubbed back into soft veils, continually remade afresh. The vibrant force-fields are there, certainly, but this is a compressed energy that has emerged after a considerable genesis – made possible as a result of what has come before.

Deborah Hart, Senior Curator, National Gallery of Australia



Torn through the white V, 2025
Mixed media on paper
47 5/8 x 31 1/2 in
121 x 80 cm

I work best in series, on a number of drawings or paintings, though one at a time, in rotation, letting them develop, gradually shaking off habits of a previous cycle and seeing something new, finding new content. There is always continuation, yet it has to come through the work and the connection is always circuitous, never linear. Each series travels this distance towards an identity I don't yet know and this can only evolve gradually, even or especially when the image has the appearance of a sudden leap or spontaneity. Construction, through both pigment, collage and erasure, is at its foundation. Content always asks for: unity, clarity and fullness.

Aida Tomescu



Born in Bucharest, Romania in 1955, Aida Tomescu has been living and working in Sydney, Australia since 1980. Tomescu studied at the Institute of Arts, Bucharest, was awarded a Diploma of Visual Arts in 1977, and shortly after her arrival to Australia completed a postgraduate degree at the City Art Institute in 1983. Tomescu has exhibited regularly since 1978 with over forty solo shows to date, and has participated in national and international exhibitions and events including Know My Name, (2020-22), National Gallery of Australia; Touring exhibition (2023-2025). Abstraction, National Gallery of Australia touring exhibition, (2017-2018); The Mind's Eye, Art Gallery of South Australia, (2013); Out of Australia: Prints and Drawings, The British Museum, London, (2011); and Contemporary Encounters, Ian Potter Centre: National Gallery of Victoria, (2010). In 2009, a major survey exhibition of Tomescu's works was held at the Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra. Tomescu is represented in all major art museums in Australia and in international collections including the National Gallery of Australia; the National Gallery of Victoria; the Art Gallery of New South Wales; the Art Gallery of South Australia; Queensland Art Gallery; Heide Museum of Modern Art; Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand; and the British Museum, London, UK. Tomescu is the winner of many prestigious art prizes including; 1996 Sulman Prize; the 2001 Wynne Prize; and the Dobell Prize for Drawing, awarded by the Art Gallery of New South Wales in 2003.

Public Collections

Allen, Allen and Hemsley
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide
Auckland Art Gallery, New Zealand
Australian National University, Canberra
Albury Regional Gallery
Allens Arthur Robinson, Sydney
Artbank
Ballarat Fine Art Gallery, Victoria
The British Museum, London
Campbelltown City Art Gallery, Sydney
The Chartwell Collection, New Zealand
Curtin University Collection Perth
The Derwent Collection, Tasmania
The Esk Collection, Tasmania
The Federal Law Courts of Australia
Geelong Art Gallery, Victoria
Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
Holmes à Court Collection, Perth
The IBM Australia Collection
La Trobe University Art Museum, Melbourne
The Macquarie Group Collection, Sydney
Mallesons Stephen Jacques, Melbourne
Monash University Museum of Art, Melbourne
Mornington Peninsula Regional Gallery, Victoria
Myer Art Foundation, Melbourne
National Gallery of Australia, Canberra
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne
Newcastle Region Art Gallery, New South Wales
New England Regional Art Museum
New South Wales Orange Regional Gallery, Orange
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane
TarraWarra Museum of Art, Victoria
Toowoomba Regional Gallery, Queensland
University of New South Wales, Sydney
University of Sydney, New South Wales
University of Queensland Art Museum, Brisbane
University of Western Sydney, New South Wales
Wagga Wagga City Art Gallery, New South Wales
Westpac Collection, New York

Solo Exhibitions

2025 *Torn through the white*, IFPDA Print Fair, Park Avenue Armory, New York
2024 *In the midst of happening,* survey exhibition John Curtin University Gallery, John Curtin University Perth, WA
2023 *With the crimson word*, Flowers Gallery London
2022 *The ear in the river and the prayer in the stone*, FOXJENSEN, Sydney
Folded in Three, Flowers Gallery, Art Basel Hong Kong
2021 *Unfolding Presence*, survey exhibition, Orange Regional Gallery, Orange, NSW
Into a Carpet made of Water, Flowers Gallery, Hong Kong
A Long Line of Sand, FOXJENSEN, Sydney
2020 *The Heart was a Place Made Fast*, FOXJENSEN McCRORY, Auckland
2019 *The Open Wounds of White Clouds*, FOXJENSEN, Sydney
2017 *Under the Iron of the Moon*, FOXJENSEN, Sydney
2015 *Eyes in the Heat*, Sullivan + Strumpf, Sydney, Australia
2014 *Folded in White*, Hugo Michell Gallery, Adelaide
2013 *Aida Tomescu*, Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne
2012 *Milky Way*, Melbourne Art Fair, Melbourne, Australia
Liverpool Street Gallery, Sydney
Grennaway Art Gallery, Adelaide
2010 *Eden*, Karen Woodbury Gallery, Melbourne
Liverpool Street Gallery, Sydney
2009 *Paintings and Drawings*, survey exhibition, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University, Canberra
Tuckson|Tomescu, Liverpool Street Gallery, Sydney
2008 *Ravel*, Niagara Gallery Melbourne
2007 *Campi Flegrei*, Liverpool Street Gallery, Sydney
2006 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
2004 Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney
Martin Browne Fine Art, Yellow House
Martin Browne Fine Art, Melbourne Art Fair
2003 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
2002 Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney
2000 Martin Browne Fine Art, Sydney
1999 Niagara Galleries, Melbourne
1997 Heide Museum of Modern Art, Melbourne
1995 Coventry Gallery, Sydney
1994 Christine Abrahams Gallery, Melbourne
1993 Coventry Gallery, Sydney
1991 Coventry Gallery, Sydney
Deutscher Brunswick Street, Melbourne
1989 Coventry Gallery, Sydney
1987 Reconnaissance Gallery, Melbourne
Coventry Gallery, Sydney
Ben Grady Gallery, Canberra
1986 Design Centre, Los Angeles, United States
1985 Coventry Gallery, Sydney
1981 Holdsworth Gallery, Sydney
1979 Cenaclu Gallery, Bucharest



Seria Neagra I-IV, 1999 and *Seria Unu I-IV*, 1993. Collection of The Art Gallery of New South Wales (AGNSW), Sydney
Unfolding Presence installation images 2021, Orange Regional Gallery. Photography by John Daly.

Tomescu's oeuvre in prints and drawings is now so substantial that she has won an enviable reputation on their basis alone. It is curious to note that she prefers using a prepared ground to bring out the painterly qualities in her drawings, while at the same time reviving a convention of the early Renaissance, when a prepared ground was commonly used for drawings done in silverpoint and black chalk. Tomescu often draws over rejected etching proofs, parts of which may be glimpsed through the darkness, or prickling along the edges of certain works. The drawn configurations respond to the stimulus of the prepared ground, but in an ultimate sense the ground is a token of a more pressing and encompassing reality.

Terence Maloon, Former Curator at AGNSW & Director, Drill Hall Gallery, Australian National University

The IFPDA Print Fair

Park Avenue Armory
643 Park Avenue, New York, NY

Opening Day
VIP Preview Thursday, March 27, 2025
Invitation and VIP Pass Only
5 - 9 PM

Public Hours
Friday, March 28, 2025
11 AM - 7 PM

Saturday, March 29, 2025
11 AM - 7 PM

Sunday, March 30, 2025
11 AM - 5 PM

FLOWERS

21 Cork Street, London, W1 3LZ

49 Tung Street, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong

